

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-9 were previously pending. Claim 1 has been amended. New claims 10-13 have been added which also patentably recite the present invention.

Claims 1-4 were rejected as anticipated by GRUDEM et al. 6,511,491.

Claims 1-4 were rejected as anticipated by KLESHINSKI 5,755,778.

Claims 5-9 were rejected as anticipated by GRUDEM et al. in view of KILLION et al. 6,159,238.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the device of the invention is not a stent but is a tubular connecting element which is to be used in combination with a stent.

None of the references teach a connecting element being used in combination with a stent. Accordingly, none of these references are anticipatory nor render obvious the present invention.

The original claim has been amended so as to clarify that the device being recited is not itself a stent but rather is a connecting element which creates a joint between a prosthetic tubular element and a blood vessel. This is clearly illustrated in the application drawing Figures 1-5.

The tubular element is element 10. The blood vessel is element 11. As illustrated, the connecting element 2 of the invention goes over the tubular element 10. The tubular element 10 is then folded over one end of the connecting element 2, thereafter the blood vessel is inserted over this end and a suture applied so that both the tubular element and the blood vessel are punctured by the protruding slender elements. See especially Figure 5 in this regard.

None of the references teach or suggest such a combination.

Nor are any of the other references structurally equivalent to that recited. GRUDEM teaches a stent 10, having an annular structure which is not structurally equivalent to the present invention.

Likewise, KLESHINSKI, though a device provided with barbs, is structurally dissimilar to the recited invention. Note that as claimed, the recited invention is rigid and serves to support an end of a section of a prosthesis in order to enable a realization of a connection between the prosthesis and an end section of the blood vessel. Again, see Figure 5. The invention's annular element is structured for realizing a connection with the modalities that are described and illustrated in the application's drawing figures.

Neither of the references anticipates such a structure, or combination of elements.

Nor does KILLION teach the missing features of the invention.

Therefore, claims 1-9 are believed to be both novel and non-obvious over the prior art.

The new claims recite the invention in alternative language which may be found to be more acceptable, yet recite patentable features of the present invention.

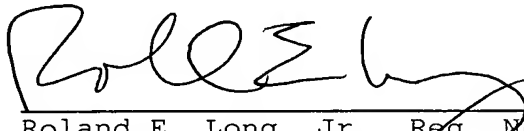
The prior art does not teach the structure of the present invention nor suggest such a system or method of accomplishing that which the present invention accomplishes.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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